

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 295624

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TO AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE

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S E C R E T STATE 295624

NODIS

FOR ARMSTRONG, SCHAUFLE ONLY; FOR SCRANTON ONLY

FOLLOWING REPEAT GENEVA 9645 SENT ACTION SECSTATE 03 DEC 76

QUOTE S E C R E T GENEVA 9645

NODIS

FOR AF-EDMONDSON FROM REINHARDT

DEPT PASS LONDON FOR SEITZ AND MASERU FOR AMB SCHAUFLE

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PFOR, RH, UK

SUBJECT: RHODESIA CONFERENCE: INTER-DELEGATION MEETING DEC 3

1. I LUNCHEd WITH IVOR RICHARD TODAY AND HE REPORTED HE WAS VERY PLEASED BY THE RESULTS OF THE DEC 3 INTER-DELEGATION MEETING.

2. THE SESSION OPENED WITH SITHOLE'S DELEGATE, MALINDI, PREDICTABLY CALLING FOR AN INTERIM GOVERNMENT WHICH WOULD BE RULED BY A PRESIDIUM OF CONFERENCE LEADERS

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SECRET

PAGE 02 STATE 295624

(WE ASSUME MALINDI REPEATED SITHOLE'S VIEW THAT DURING

THE 15 MONTH TRANSITION EACH OF THE LEADERS OF THE GENEVA DELEGATIONS WOULD CHAIR THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS IN TURN). MUGABE, NKOMO AND THE MUZOREWA DELEGATION QUESTIONED MALINDI CLOSELY AND POINTED UP WEAKNESSES IN HIS SCHEME. MALINDI DEFENDED HIS CASE BUT, GIVEN ITS FLAWS, WAS NOT ENTIRELY CONVINCING.

3. ACCORDING TO RICHARD, THE NATIONALIST DELEGATIONS THEN TURNED TO A GENERAL DISCUSSION OF INTERM GOVERNMENT PRINCIPLES. THE DISCUSSION WAS LOGICAL, TO THE POINT, AND DURING THE COURSE OF WHICH, THE POINTS OF VIEWS OF EACH DELEGATION CAME CLOSER AND CLOSER TOGETHER.

4. INCREASINGLY NERVOUS THROUGHOUT THE DISCUSSIONS, VAN DER BYL FINALLY CHIMED IN WITH REASONABLY UNHELPFUL AND PROVOCATIVE NOISES. THE NATIONALISTS ANSWERED HIM CLAMLY AND CONTINUED WITH THEIR EXCHANGE.

5. AT 1:00, RICHARD SAID HE BANGED THE GAVEL DOWN AND ADJOURNED UNTIL TOMORROW.

6. ASSESSING THE EVENTS OF THE DAY, RICHARD SAID THAT HE WAS MOST IMPRESSED BY THE PERFORMANCE OF THE NATIONALISTS. THEIR POSITIONS, HE SAID, ARE COMING TOGETHER. BOTH SITHOLE'S PROPOSAL FOR A PRESIDUM AND MUZOREWA'S CALL FOR ELECTIONS SEEM TO BE SLIPPING TO ONE SIDE. NATIONALISTS' POINTS OF VIEW ARE CONVERGING ON THE NEED FOR A COMPLETE TRANSFER OF POWER DURING THE INTERIM GOVERNMENT. WITH SEVERAL MORE ROUNDS LIKE THE ONE TODAY, AND BY NO LATER THAN THE MIDDLE OF NEXT WEEK, RICHARD BELIEVES HE WILL HAVE A CONCERTED NATIONALIST POINT OF VIEW. THE RHODESIANS, HE ADDED, HAVE GIVEN NO INDICATION THEY ARE PREPARED TO DEAL WITH THE NATIONALIST CASE OR ENTER INTO DISCUSSIONS ON THE ROLE OF THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT

7. I UNDERSTAND UPON LEAVING THE CONFERENCE, VAN DER BYL ATTACKED THE PROCEEDINGS IN FAIRLY VOCIFEROUS TERMS. HE WILL CALL ON RICHARD AGAIN THIS AFTERNOON. CATTO

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PAGE 03 STATE 295624

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